

A LEAGUE OF NATIONS

SPEECH

OF

HON. JOSEPH S. FRELINGHUYSEN

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IN THE

SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

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Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. President, I agree with the Senator from Wisconsin [Mr. LENROOT] in the statement that this is the most important question at this time before the country, and it is the duty of those men who represent the people to express their views upon this subject. The conditions as suggested in the proposal of the league of nations should not be imposed upon the people of this country until they have a full realization of what those conditions are and what they mean, and the men who represent their constituencies should not be criticized if, through honest criticism, they oppose the conditions of the league, because it is their duty, in my opinion, to state publicly their views. In my State I have been somewhat criticized because it has been stated that I am opposed to a league of nations.

I do not wish at this time, in the closing hours of the session, to take too much of the valuable time of the Senate in discussing this question, but in view of the fact that we shall shortly adjourn and it is doubtful whether an extra session will be soon called, which I fervently hoped might be very soon called, in order to dispose of the important questions before the country, I feel that it is my duty at this time to state very definitely my views upon this important question.

Mr. President, on November 11, 1918, the President of the United States announced to Congress in joint session the terms of the armistice accepted and signed by the German authorities and informed us that the war thereby came to an end.

On December 2, 1918, he again appeared before Congress in joint session and stated his intention of departing immediately for Europe. In the course of his address he said:

I welcome this occasion to announce my purpose to join in Paris the representatives of the Governments with which we have been associated in the war against the central empires for the purpose of discussing with them the main features of the treaty of peace.

The allied Governments have accepted the bases of peace which I outlined to the Congress on the 8th of January last, as the central empires also have, and very reasonably desire my personal counsel in their interpretation and application, and it is highly desirable that I should give it in order that the sincere desire of our Government to contribute without selfish purpose of any kind to settlements that will be of common benefit to all the nations concerned may be made fully manifest. The peace settlements which are now to be agreed upon are of transcendent importance both to us and to the rest of the world, and I know of no business or interest which should take precedence of them.

We hope, I believe, for the formal conclusion of the war by treaty by the time spring has come.

Spring has almost come, the President has returned, but without any treaty of peace, and, so far as I can gather, without any clear conception as to when there will be a treaty of peace.

More than three months have elapsed since the armistice was signed. Almost daily during that period I have been importuned, as I am sure every other Senator has been importuned, to know when our boys will all be returned. If I can believe the relatives of the boys themselves, they, too, desire to return and long for their homes, now that the actual fighting has ceased and time hangs heavily upon their hands. On all sides business men are clamoring for a return to peace conditions. Why a treaty of peace has not been concluded and when a treaty of peace is likely to be concluded are questions on which I have no more light than the average citizen.

When the President announced his departure for Europe he assured us:

I shall be in close touch with you and with affairs on this side of the water and you will know all that I do. At my request the French and English Governments have absolutely removed the censorship of cable news which until within a fortnight they had maintained, and there is now no censorship whatever exercised at this end, except upon attempted trade communications with enemy countries. * * * I did so at the advice of the most experienced cable officials, and I hope that the results will justify my hope that the news of the next few months may pass with the utmost freedom and with the least possible delay from each side of the sea to the other.

Notwithstanding the promise made by the President that he would be in close touch with Congress and with affairs on this side of the water and that we would know all that he did, I am sure it is an open secret that the President never communicated any information to Congress during his absence of almost 12 weeks.

On the eve of his departure he told us, as above stated, that the allied governments accepted the bases of peace which he outlined on January 8, 1918. The first basis called for "open covenants of peace openly arrived at." Had that basis been followed and had the censorship of cable news been removed as he assured us it would be, we could have learned through the press all that was taking place. Instead, however, of "open covenants of peace openly arrived at" we learn from the press that practically all negotiations take place in secret.

At the time of the departure of the President, December 4, 1918, I introduced the following resolution in the Senate:

Whereas the President has informed Congress that the bases of peace outlined by him on the 8th of January last have been accepted by the allied Governments and by the central empires, and that it is his duty to see that no false or mistaken interpretation is put upon them; and

Whereas the President has never stated his own interpretation of such bases and the same, particularly those relating to "A league of nations" and the "Freedom of the seas," are open to various interpretations, some of which may be in conflict with established national traditions; and

Whereas the President has announced that the various steps in the approaching negotiations abroad shall be promptly made known to the American people: Therefore be it

Resolved, That the President be, and he is hereby, respectfully requested to make publicly known his own interpretation of his proposed peace terms as presented to Congress January 8, 1918, and not attempt to impose such interpretation upon the international conference about to assemble until full opportunity is presented to the American public to become acquainted with the same, to the end that this Nation may not be committed to policies in contravention of the traditions of the United States; and be it further

Resolved, That a copy of this resolution be forthwith transmitted to the President.

At the time of its introduction and by way of explanation I made the following statement:

"Mr. President, in his address to Congress of December 2 the President informed us that the bases of peace outlined by him to us on the 8th of January last have been accepted by the allied Governments and by the central empires, and by way of explanation of his trip to Europe he stated that it was his duty to see 'that no false or mistaken interpretation is put upon them.'

"In view of this explanation it requires no argument to show that various interpretations may be placed upon the bases of peace which he outlined. Some of the bases relate not merely to a settlement of the present war but to our relations in the future with all governments. Heretofore we have been guided by certain traditions. The immortal Washington, in his Farewell Address, gave certain advice, which we have religiously followed. He said:

"Europe has a set of primary interests which to us have none or a very remote relation. Hence she must be engaged in frequent controversies, the causes of which are essentially foreign to our concerns. Hence, therefore, it must be unwise in us to implicate ourselves by artificial ties in the ordinary vicissitudes of her politics or the ordinary combinations and collisions of her friendships or enmities.

"It may well be that conditions have so changed that we should no longer follow advice by which we have been guided for more than a century. As a representative of the people, it seems to me that we should not bind ourselves to a policy at variance with it unless certain that such is the will of the people.

"The fourteenth basis proposed by the President reads:

"A general association of nations must be formed under specific covenants for the purpose of affording mutual guaranties of political independence and territorial integrity to great and small States alike.

"Does this basis mean that we will join with European nations in a guaranty of the political independence and territorial integrity of all States both great and small? Does it mean that to preserve such territorial integrity and political independence we will, in fulfillment of our guaranty, use, whenever necessary, our Army and Navy? Does it mean that henceforth we must take part in all political and territorial disputes throughout the world? We have among us many who came to our shores and the children of many who came to our shores because of the constant quarrels and jealousies of European nations and because of the fear that such quarrels and jealousies might any day involve them in war. I do not say that we should not do our utmost to prevent future wars. That I concede is our duty, but if we propose to obligate ourselves to use our Army and Navy whenever necessary in any part of the world to preserve peace we should be certain that we are conforming to the will of those whom we represent.

"The President is the chosen leader of the United States. Any proposal which he may make will naturally carry with it great weight. If he proposes in behalf of the United States the use of its Army and Navy to preserve the peace of the world, or if he assents to any such proposal if made by another nation, what position will the Senate be in should such a proposal be adopted? Constitutionally we will be free to exercise our own judgment and to accept or reject any treaty which the Executive may ne-

gotiate. Will we, however, be free from embarrassment should other nations say to us, 'Your Chief Executive spoke in behalf of the American public and supposedly voiced their views'? That brings me to the point of my motion. Is the President sure that his interpretation of the bases of peace is the interpretation of the American public? As he has never made known such interpretation, how can he be sure? Should he not, in all justice, before he makes any proposal on such momentous questions make known to the public what interpretation he places upon his fourteenth basis, and should he not afford the public an opportunity to voice its opinion?

"The fourteenth basis is not the only one which involves a comparison of our past traditions with what should be our policy in the future. During the Civil War in order to preserve the Union we found it necessary to insist upon and to exercise the right to condemn cargo owned by a neutral and shipped from one neutral port to another neutral port where it appeared that such cargo was ultimately intended for transshipment to the enemy. In Europe the doctrine of ultimate destination was disputed, but if that doctrine had not been practiced during the present war who will dare say what would have been the result? Certainly the prevention of supplies reaching Germany through neutral countries contributed in no small measure to her defeat. Can anyone here tell me what is the true interpretation of the second basis of peace outlined by the President in January last? It reads:

"Absolute freedom of navigation upon the seas, outside territorial waters, alike in peace and in war, except as the seas may be closed in whole or in part by international action for the enforcement of international covenants.

"If such had been the rule during the Civil War, could supplies have flowed uninterruptedly from Europe to the South by way of Mexico? If in force during the present war, could supplies have flowed uninterruptedly from North and South America to Germany through Holland? I confess that I do not know what is the true interpretation of the phrase 'absolute freedom of navigation upon the seas,' and as a representative of the people I respectfully suggest that if the President's interpretation involves a departure from our traditions he should not propound such interpretation as a proposal in behalf of the American public unless he is certain that the American public approves it. How can he be certain that the American public approves an interpretation which has never been made known to it?

"It is hardly necessary for me to call attention to any other basis of peace proposed by the President to illustrate my viewpoint. There has never been a time in our history which called for greater caution and wisdom. There has never been a time when the practice of pitiless publicity, so frequently advocated by the President, was more urgently required. The American public is a reading public, a thinking public. It does not hesitate and will not hesitate to express its opinion if afforded an opportunity. In my opinion the President should not in behalf of the American public make proposals which involve a radical departure unless he is certain that his proposal carries with it the approval of the people. Though we are not bound by any treaty which he may negotiate, still, in view of the fact that he was chosen by the people to the highest position in the country,

other nations may not recognize that his proposals are subject to our review and may feel affronted should we differ from him. It is his duty as well as ours to act for the people; and, to avoid misunderstanding, it seems to me that the people should be told by him what is the interpretation which he places upon his basis of peace and should be advised to what extent he intends in their behalf to propose a policy which may involve an abandonment of our traditions. All I ask is that the public should be taken into the confidence of the President, that he should afford the public an opportunity to express its views, and, should it appear that there is a pronounced view upon any subject, that he will not run counter to it. It is for such reason that I have introduced my motion."

Mr. President, more than three months have passed since I suggested that the public should be taken into the confidence of the President and should be afforded an opportunity to express its views upon the bases of peace suggested by him, and particularly upon his proposed league of nations. Has the public been taken into the confidence of the President? It has to this extent: That a league of nations recommended by representatives of 14 powers has been presented to the world, and the President on the day of his arrival in Boston delivered an address. If I read that address correctly, the President resents criticism of the league of peace. He argued that we had fought not so much to defeat the Germans but to establish liberty throughout the world, and that now it was our duty henceforth to preserve liberty not merely in the United States but anywhere and everywhere. He sets up no simple task for ourselves and our posterity. His appeal, however—and I say it with all due respect—was to sentiment rather than to reason. It is rarely that the author of any project that will stand criticism and dissection resents either or resorts to threats against those who attempt to try either. Yet, if I read the Boston address correctly, anyone who dares to dissent from the league of nations is threatened with dire results. To avoid misunderstanding I will quote a few passages:

Any man who resists the present tides that run in the world will find himself thrown upon a shore so high and barren that it will seem as if he had been separated from his human kind forever.

He continued that it was our duty not only to sign a treaty of peace but also to combine with others to make it good and to give assurances to the people of the world "that they shall be safe." Without such combination and assurances he stated that a treaty of peace would be but "a modern scrap of paper," though I do not see any place in the address wherein he established that a paper league of nations might not also be but a modern scrap of paper. However, he proclaimed that any man who dared to think that America is not willing to combine to make good any treaty of peace which may be established and to give assurances to all people that they shall be safe did not know his country. He invites such men to test the sentiments of the country, urging that it is our duty to make men free everywhere, and that anyone unwilling to undertake such a task is provincial and that he for one is ready to measure swords with him. He said:

I have fighting blood in me, and it is sometimes a delight to let it have scope; but if it is a challenge on this occasion it will be an indulgence.

What a change has the trip to Europe made! Only two years ago the President was elected to a second term of office. What was urged for his reelection? Was it not that he had kept us out of war? Can it be claimed of the President that he raised one finger to save Belgium or to save France or to save any of the oppressed peoples of Europe? Was he not criticized here at home because he was "too proud to fight," and did he not close his eyes to the fact that American rights were being trampled upon by Germany, and that we were scorned and dishonored? Did he not tell us that we should be neutral not only in fact but also in thought? Did he resort to war against Germany until men like Col. Roosevelt and other citizens insisted that the country had some honor, and that the rights of our citizens must be safeguarded? Did he not in his address of February 26, 1917, advise merely "armed neutrality," explaining such act on the following April 2, when Germany had actually forced us into war, as follows:

I thought that it would suffice to assert our neutrality rights with arms, our right to use the seas against unlawful interference, our right to keep our people safe against unlawful violence.

He found armed neutrality insufficient to the protection of our rights, and he engaged in the war because Germany at the time was really waging war on us, and because public sentiment refused to close its eyes to that fact. Now the man who, in spite of bitter criticism and the fact that the honor of our country was at stake, refused to fight, heaps maledictions on the heads of those who dare to question his plan to fight if necessary to make not our people but the people of the whole world safe, and who does not hesitate to say to those who question the wisdom of such a course that he has fighting blood in him, and that to now fight for the people of the whole world will be an indulgence.

This is surely remarkable language for a man who two years ago seemed to consider a fight for the protection of the rights of American citizens as a most bitter pill.

The world longs for peace. For centuries men have studied and discussed plans to prevent wars. So far no successful plan has been devised. I am willing to advocate any plan that will prevent wars. The President has my admiration and congratulations for the study which he has given to the subject and for his tireless efforts in that direction. I can not believe, however, that universal peace will come through any plan which its authors refuse to have the public carefully study, criticize, and understand before giving approval.

As a Senator of the United States, I feel that my duty is first to the people of the United States. To me it seems that the question is not whether the plan is better for, say, the Balkans, but whether it will be in harmony with the opening of our Constitution. As the opening clause of the Constitution is rarely referred to and seems to be ignored in discussion, I will read it:

We, the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

Will this proposed plan secure "the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity"? Will it insure domestic tranquillity? Will it promote the general welfare and common de-

fense? These are questions which we must all consider, and we must not refrain from their consideration because of threats, no matter how or by whom made. We must perform our duty. We are all for universal peace, but primarily we are all for the United States. We should not make any change in our policies unless we are reasonably sure that such change will promote the interests of the United States.

It is with some surprise that I have read a statement of Mr. Taft, a man whom I greatly respect and admire, to the effect that he who objects to the proposed league of nations should suggest another remedy to prevent war or else hold his peace. Mr. Taft certainly has an advantage over me in that he has had legal training and unusual experience on the bench and at the bar. As a plain business man, however, in the conduct of my business I always believed and supposed that other men believed that when any of my associates or subordinates proposed a change in the manner of conducting our business that it was up to the person proposing the change to show why it should be made. I think the lawyers call it "the burden of proof." For more than a century we have pursued a certain policy. A change is now advocated. I confess I can not see why those who desire to look carefully into the change should be told that they must hold their peace unless they can propose a better change. Logically, it seems to me that those who are proposing the change must satisfy the people that it is to their interest to make it, and they should cheerfully welcome all questions and criticisms, so as to be afforded an opportunity to carry the burden and to demonstrate beyond doubt that we have reached the parting of the ways; that we must abandon our old policies and pursue a new course. In short, to my mind those who advocate a departure from the course outlined by the immortal Washington must show very clearly and convincingly that that proposed by Mr. Wilson, though as yet untried, is superior to that of Washington, which has stood the test of more than a century.

Neither the Senate nor the House of Representatives nor the people of the United States can be treated as school children nor even college undergraduates. The very first amendment to our Constitution provided for freedom of speech and of the press, and if there is one thing which citizens of the United States cherish it is the right to consider acts of their representatives and to freely criticize them. Criticism does not necessarily mean hostility. We all want peace—peace not merely in the United States, but peace throughout the world, because war in any part of the world has more or less effect upon every other part. If it is possible to have a league of nations which will substitute the pen for the sword, we most certainly want it. A league of nations is now proposed, and as a Member of the Senate I consider it not only my right but my duty to call attention to parts in it which I do not understand and to seek information which will enable me and those whom I represent to determine whether it should be adopted as it is; and if not, whether it is capable of amendment and in what respects. Light, however, upon it and some illustrations of how it may work are required. The Committee on Foreign Relations has had an opportunity to confer with the President, and from him I hope it has gained such light that it will be able to explain to us the mean-

ing of certain clauses of the league which are not entirely clear and to illustrate to the public what may be expected to happen under it.

In the preamble of the league it is recited that it is adopted to promote international cooperation and to establish justice "and a scrupulous respect for all treaty obligations in the dealings of organized peoples with one another." Are we prepared to enter into a compact that all existing treaty obligations between any of the parties to the league must be scrupulously observed? Time and again have we heard the charge made that the bane of civilization is secret treaties. I can not find in the text of the league any provision that all treaties now existing between any of the parties to it must be laid on the table and exposed to the public view.

Mr. HITCHCOCK. I think the Senator will find such a provision in the articles of the league.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Will the Senator please point it out? I am anxious to have my questions answered, and I intend that these questions shall go into the RECORD; and before I make up my opinion on this league of nations I shall demand that those questions be answered. I will continue while the Senator is hunting for the provision.

I had hoped that henceforth there would be no secret treaties and that the people of each nation would know the compacts which their own nation and every other nation had made.

By article 23 of the league the contracting parties agree "that every treaty or international engagement entered into hereafter by any State member of the league shall be forthwith registered." Why limit the registration to treaties "hereafter" made? Perhaps the Senator can answer that. It is true that by article 25 the parties agree that all obligations interse "which are inconsistent with the terms" of the league shall be deemed abrogated. Who is to determine if they are inconsistent, and how is it to be determined if the treaties are not made public? In other words, it seems to me that the President is proposing a league which tacitly recognizes the existence of secret treaties and which does not require their publication. If it is logical to have future treaties registered, why is it not just as logical to have past treaties registered? Why should we enter into a compact where some of the parties to it may have obligations among themselves of which we know nothing, and from which we might shrink if we did know them. When the President was governor of the State of New Jersey and I was a member of the senate of that State, he advocated pitiless publicity. Let us have pitiless publicity upon all phases of any compact to which we are a party. May I therefore ask the Committee on Foreign Relations the following question?

Question 1. Is it true that if the league of nations as proposed is entered into, some of the parties to it can keep secret treaties made between them at any time prior to its adoption?

In article 2 it is provided that each of the contracting parties shall have one vote, while from article 7 I would infer that not only may a nation be a party to the league, but also its dominions and colonies. Does that mean that a nation with a number of colonies may have as many votes as it has colonies plus its own vote? It has been charged here that Great Britain will have five votes. We have all seen in the press long before the league of nations became public that Great Britain would not

submit to any curtailment of its navy or to any interference with its rights on the sea. One of Mr. Wilson's 14 points called for absolute freedom of navigation upon the seas. I can not find any reference to that point in the proposed constitution of the league of nations. In the address which Mr. Wilson delivered in Boston the other day he calls attention to many new nations which will be set up in Europe, such as the Polish Nation, the Nation of Czecho-Slavoks, and the Nation of Jugo-Slavs. Many of our citizens never heard of the latter two nationalities until within the past year. No mention, however, is made in Mr. Wilson's address of the Irish. If Great Britain has been forceful enough to keep out of the league of nations all reference to freedom of the seas, and if Mr. Wilson could not call attention to the organization of any nation for the Irish, what will Great Britain be able to do if it is true as is charged on the floor of this Senate that she will when the league of nations is organized have five votes? A reference to the Declaration of Independence will show that the Colonies on July 4, 1776, solemnly published and declared that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain is and ought to be totally dissolved, and for seven years they waged war to dissolve it, and they did dissolve it. Are we now to enter into a compact whereby Great Britain will have five votes and we one? May I, therefore, ask the Committee on Foreign Relations the following question, and I will ask the reporter to mark it "Q. 2":

Question 2. Is it true that in the league of nations, if adopted in its present form, Great Britain will have more votes than the United States of America?

May I also ask:

Question 3. Is it possible that if the league of nations is adopted as proposed, people who were formerly subject to our enemies shall have the right of self-determination, but such right shall be denied to people who are subject to those who fought with us against our enemies?

In article 5 it is provided that the secretary general of the league shall be chosen by the executive council. May I ask the Committee on Foreign Relations the following question:

Question 4. If it can tell us if there is anything in the proposed league which will prevent some of the parties to it from uniting in an agreement before its adoption as to the personnel of the secretary general?

In article 8 it is provided that the executive council shall determine for the consideration and action of the several Governments what military equipment and armament is fair and reasonable in proportion to the scale of forces laid down in the program of disarmament, and that such limits when adopted shall not be exceeded without the permission of the executive council.

It is also provided that national armaments should be reduced to lowest point consistent with national safety, having special regard to the geographical situation and circumstances of each State. Inasmuch as we are protected by an ocean on the east and on the west, is it not possible that the executive council may conclude that we should reduce our military equipment and armament to a minimum, while Great Britain, because of its geographical position, should maintain supremacy on the sea and should also, because of proximity to the Conti-

nent of Europe, maintain a substantial military equipment and armament?

Question 5. Are the people of this country satisfied to have a council made up of representatives of governments the majority of which are of a form different from ours pass upon such a vital question as to the size of our Army and Navy? Perhaps the committee can give us some light on the subject, and I therefore ask them:

Question 6. To what extent will the United States part with its right to determine the size of its own Army and Navy should it enter into the league of nations as proposed?

In article 10 the parties agree to respect and preserve as against external aggression the territorial integrity and existing political independence of all the members of the league.

This article is one to which I have given much thought and study. I will refrain from expressing my views at length upon it until I am better informed as to just what it means. Let us assume that the league of nations had been adopted in 1775. Could France have come to the aid of the Colonies if she had obligated herself to respect the territorial integrity of Great Britain? Would she have exposed herself to attack by other parties of the league if she attempted to help the Colonies? Would she not by so doing have been guilty of external aggression against Great Britain?

Take our War with Mexico. If that clause had been in existence, would Texas have been a part of the United States? Would California be a part of the United States? Take our War with Spain. Could we have helped Cuba? Would Cuba now be a Republic? Would we even now be a Republic? Does this clause mean an end to the possibilities of people overthrowing their form of Government? Some of the nations who will be parties to the league will have colonies, just as we were a colony of Great Britain in 1776. If any colony, after the adoption of the league of nations, attempts to set up self-government, can it look for any help from people who enjoy self-government? Will not help be practically prohibited? May I therefore ask the Committee on Foreign Relations the following question:

Question 7. Assuming that a league of nations in the form proposed was in effect at the time of our Revolution could France have assisted us? Assuming that it was in effect at the time Texas became attached to the Union could Texas have become part of the Union? Assuming that it was in effect at the time of our War with Spain would Cuba now be free?

Articles 12, 13, 14, and 15 relate to the submission of disputes to arbitration. Article 13 seems to restrict the submission to such disputes as the parties to them consider suitable for submission, but article 12 provides that in no case shall there be resort to war without submission. Germany committed acts against us in 1915, 1916, and 1917 which were not suitable for arbitration. She committed acts which any self-respecting nation would resent by force. If in the future acts are committed against us which affect our honor, the lives and property of our citizens, must we refrain from war and submit same to arbitration? Are we obligated to allow such acts to continue during the pendency of the arbitration? Must we submit to continued insults for months until a decision is rendered? If the executive council passes upon a dispute to which we are

a party and unanimously decides against us even though we are convinced that such unanimity is the result of a combination against us and even though the decision subjects us to a continuance of insults and an encroachment upon the rights of our citizens, must we submit to it or fight the whole league? If by force we resent some insult rather than submit the matter involved to arbitration it would seem under article 16 we would ipso facto be deemed to have committed an act of war against all other members of the league.

I am sure you all remember how frequently Mr. Roosevelt called attention to the fact that there were some matters which no self-respecting nation could submit to arbitration; that nations are like men, and that there are certain kinds of insults which no self-respecting nation or no man with red blood in his veins can delay resenting until some one else passes upon it. There are times when the honor of a nation or the honor of a man must be resented on the spot, and a nation or a man which does not resent certain kinds of insults the instant they occur is not worthy of being called a nation or a man. May I, therefore, ask the Committee on Foreign Relations the following question:

Question 8. Must all questions, irrespective of how they affect our honor or the lives and property of our citizens, be submitted to arbitration; and if so, is it not possible for the offending nation to continue the insult or invasion of our rights pending the arbitration?

Under article 10 and the articles relating to arbitration it is not clear to me what may be the result if two nations in South America should become involved in war. It seems possible that the league of nations might decide that one of them was guilty of violation of the constitution of the league, and that as a result all the other members of the league should make war upon it. Should such a decision be rendered and should war be made by all upon a nation of South America, that nation undoubtedly would be defeated. I see nothing in the terms of the league which would prevent some portion of the territory of the defeated nation being taken to compensate some or all the members of the league for their losses. In other words, I do not feel certain that it would not be possible under this league for European nations to secure some of the territory of a nation of South America or, say, even of Mexico and colonize it, contrary to the Monroe doctrine. May I, therefore, ask the Committee on Foreign Relations the following question:

Question 9. Is it not possible in the event of a war in which members of the league take part against an American nation for some or all of the members to insist upon and to secure part of the territory of an American nation as compensation and to colonize such part contrary to the Monroe doctrine?

In article 20 provision is made for the establishment of a permanent bureau of labor as part of the organization of the league. What the functions of such a bureau will be I do not know. How they will be determined is not clear. It occurs to me that perhaps its functions will be determined by the executive council or by the delegates of the parties to the league. We certainly will be in the minority. The conditions of labor in this country are better, I believe, than in any other part of the world, and it may be possible that labor in this country will run the risk of an attempt to pull down the standards which

prevail here. I would therefore submit the following question to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

Question 10. What will be the functions of the permanent bureau of labor, and by whom and how will such functions be determined, and what effect may such bureau have upon the rights of labor in the United States?

A reading of the entire text makes me wonder what would have been the effect on our Civil War had such a league existed during that period. We all remember the attitude of England during the Civil War. Even Gladstone was hostile to the North, and his language at times led our minister to wonder if he should not depart. Had it not been for the attitude of Russia, England would probably have interfered in behalf of the South. If such a league was in force during the Civil War, and if Great Britain had, as charged on the floor of this Senate, five votes in the league, would the Union have been preserved—would slavery have been abolished? Perhaps our committee, after its discussion with our President, is in a position to answer the following question:

Question 11. What would have been the probable effect upon the controversy between the North and the South during the Civil War if the league of nations then existed and if, as charged, Great Britain would have five votes?

I suppose that we should read the proposed league in the light of the President's address in Boston on the 24th of this month. To illustrate what I have in mind, I quote the following from that address:

Do you believe in the aspirations of the Czecho-Slovaks and the Jugo-Slavs as I do? Do you know how many powers would be quick to pounce upon them if there were not the guaranties of the world behind their liberty?

Have you thought of the sufferings of Armenia? You poured out your money to help succor the Armenians after they suffered; now set your strength so that they shall never suffer again.

Reading the league in the light of such statements, I am led to the conclusion that it is the desire and intention of the President that this Nation with its Army and Navy should be prepared to protect Poland against aggression, to protect the Jugo-Slavs against aggression, to protect the Czecho-Slovaks against aggression, and to protect the Armenians against aggression. Is it possible that he intends that we should be ready with our Army and Navy to protect every nation in the world against aggression? Are we to be involved in every dispute, and must we be ready at all times to ship our soldiers overseas? Will the mothers of the United States sanction any such plan? Will the taxpayers of the United States be prepared to bear the expense? Are we to be the big brother of every nation? Are we to be the peacemaker of the world? I challenge anyone who reads the address of the President made in Boston to draw any other conclusion than that Europe to-day is a seething cauldron and that the nations will be at each other's throats within a generation unless we prevent it, and that none of the nations of Europe trust each other, but that all trust in us. Are we to join a partnership of that kind? Are we to join a partnership every member of which, excepting ourselves, is suspicious of every other member and ready at the first opportunity to pounce upon it? The rôle of peacemaker in such a combination is indeed one to be seriously considered. How often has it been said that the peacemaker, instead of

promoting peace, has been torn to pieces? Far be it from me to think that Europe is as bad as the President paints it. Perhaps I have misinterpreted his meaning. I am willing, however, to have light, and I therefore ask the Committee on Foreign Relations the following question:

Question 12. If the United States joins in the league of nations, as proposed, must we be prepared with our Army and Navy at all times to protect every party to it? To bring home the thought which I have in mind I will, perhaps, be a little more specific.

Question 13. Assuming that an independent Poland is established, that Germany and Russia are restored, and that they unite in an attack upon Poland, must we be prepared with our Army and Navy to make war upon Germany and Russia?

The President has invited those who would question the league of nations to test the sentiment of this Nation. The views of our people not only should be ascertained but must be ascertained. All phases of the league should be discussed and considered. What we want is the decision of this Nation, based upon reflection and reason and not upon mere sentiment. Let us have free and open discussion. Let the public consider not merely the advantages of the proposed league but also the burdens. Let the public say whether it is satisfied with the league as proposed or, if not, whether it can be amended so as to be made satisfactory, and, if so, in what respects. The public looks forward to the day when war will be a thing of the past. If, owing to human imperfections, such a day may never come, we all wish to reduce wars in any event to a minimum. If the proposed league will accomplish that result, the public, no doubt, will favor it, but as the proposed league is at least to some extent visionary and experimental, the public, unless I am mistaken, will join with me in a search for light upon its meaning and for information about the burdens we will assume and the possibilities which may ensue from its establishment. The President is sure the public approves it as it is and threatens with isolation upon a barren shore those of his fellow citizens who would question it, while for the Government of any foreign nation that dares oppose it he predicts that the people of such nation will rise in their might and overthrow such a Government.

Notwithstanding his threats, I dare ask for light to guide me to a decision of what is my duty to the people of the United States. With all due respect to the President I differ from his conclusion upon my duty. My duty is first to my own country. If I can be true to my own country and at the same time help the world I will do so.

Perhaps the President knows the heart and the mind of the American people better than I do. I can not, however, believe that the President can take pride in the fact that the war was won because of his inspiration, and he states that his views about the duty of this country are infallible and not open to criticism, and upbraids and threatens not only his fellow citizens but also foreign nations who question his views. I can not believe the President thoroughly understands the sentiment of his fellow citizens, and for one I prefer to ascertain that sentiment directly from our fellow citizens rather than to take it without question from him.

